

# SEATTLE WOMEN

Fall/Winter 1999

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The Seattle Women's Commission (SWC) is a 20-member volunteer citizens board that advises the Mayor, City Council, and all City departments on women's issues. Contact us anytime at (206) 684-0549.

## So far in 1999...

### ...an update about the current work program of the Seattle Women's Commission

*It has been a busy but fruitful year for the Seattle Women's Commission (SWC). Beginning the year with a Childcare & Welfare Reform forum, to the reception with Krishanti Dharmaraj about CEDAW (UN Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women), to anti-harassment training in schools, the work covered by the Commission's four Issue Committees is vast yet focused.*

## Anti-Harassment Project

The SWC has advocated for anti-harassment training in Seattle Public Schools for several years, and we are proud to report that the first year of **"We All Belong! Stop Harassment"** is well underway. Four secondary schools (Mercer & Denny Middle Schools, Ingraham & Roosevelt High Schools) are participating. Initial staff trainings were conducted this fall, and core teams of teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and students from each school are planning student and parent education campaigns for next February.

The SWC thanks Mayor Paul Schell for a \$15,000 grant for this project. Additional money raised, in cooperation with the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR), brings the total to over \$33,000. Thanks go to our many community and corporate donors, including IKEA and AGRA companies, and the Intiman Theater. This project results from a strong partnership forged amongst the SWC, SOCR, and the Seattle School District. Implementing substantial and effective district-wide training is the next step. The SWC is meeting with top district officials to see how this first-year model might be applied in the future. Our vision is a school environment safe and welcoming for every student to achieve her or his full academic potential.

### **You have an opportunity to help!**

Volunteers experienced in training or education are needed to deliver an anti-harassment curriculum to students in the classroom. Please review the enclosures in this mailing and contact us today with your completed application form.

## Homelessness

This committee has focused its research on the effects of homelessness on women and their families. This has included research regarding formerly homeless women, women who are currently homeless, and those who are on the margins of being homeless in the near future. The SWC is working in alliance with the Women's Homeless Coalition to reach a goal of the elimination of homelessness by recommending viable alternatives. The SWC plans to hold three

roundtable discussions over the next months, bringing policy makers together with organizations in the community, to discuss steps and solutions to homelessness. Together with other groups addressing homelessness in Seattle, the SWC plans to host a large public forum December 2000 to recommend solutions and policies for ending homelessness for women and their families.

## Children's Issues &

### Legislative Work

This year the Children's Issues Committee sponsored a forum "Welfare Reform & Childcare: Who's minding the children?" to gather data and recommendations regarding child care for families moving from welfare to work. This committee also worked on Project Lift Off, voicing the SWC's concerns to make sure that the broadest range of parents would be included in project planning – those from communities of color, refugees, limited-English speaking, etc. In July, this committee began efforts to include the concerns of the SWC and Seattle women as part of the City of Seattle Legislative Agenda. The SWC adopted the following legislative agenda for the year 2000:

- ❖ Support changing the TANF (Temp. Assistance to Needy Families) age requirement
- ❖ Oppose any parental notification bill for girls wanting an abortion
- ❖ Support breast feeding legislation
- ❖ Support any CEDAW legislation
- ❖ Support tax credits for employer-sponsored child care
- ❖ Support Safe Schools legislation

## Workplace Issues

### **SURVEY OF FEMALE FIRE FIGHTERS**

In late July, the SWC distributed work atmosphere surveys to all female firefighters in the Seattle Fire Department. Nearly 50% of these surveys were returned and results are now being transcribed and tabulated for analysis. The current survey was modeled after a department survey conducted in 1994. Results of the two

instruments will be compared to assess change in work atmosphere over the intervening years.

Workplace Issues (continued)

**FEMALE FRIENDLY WORKPLACES**

In partnership with the King County Women's Advisory Board (KCWAB), the Seattle Women's Commission is working to develop a tool to evaluate local employers on policies and practices that are of benefit to female employees. The KCWAB funded a study that will create the survey tool. Local employers will be asked to participate in the survey, and an award ceremony will be held next year to announce the top employers for women in King County.

**CEDAW**

The SWC is conducting research and holding workshops on CEDAW – the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. CEDAW was signed by President Carter, but has not yet been ratified by the U.S. Senate. The U.S. is the only industrialized nation that has failed to ratify the Convention. Local jurisdictions are beginning to take it up as a useful tool to establish a baseline of expectations for human rights for women. San Francisco passed an ordinance adopting and implementing the CEDAW platform; the SWC is researching the possibility of proposing a similar ordinance in Seattle.

**Commission Meetings**

The Seattle Women's Commission meets on the third Monday evening of each month from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. in Room 221, Municipal Building, 600 4th Avenue. Volunteers are welcome!

**Meetings are open to the public.**

Women's organizations, other groups, or individuals wishing to introduce a significant issue concerning women's rights to the SWC agenda are urged to first contact the Co-Chairs at (206) 684-0549.

**Visit Our Website!**

The SWC is updating and expanding its website. Suggestions are appreciated!

[www.ci.seattle.wa.us/seattle/civil/swc.htm](http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/seattle/civil/swc.htm)

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**Thank you!**

Co-Chair Florence Adeyemi,  
editor of this edition of Seattle Women;  
Diane Piña, SOCR Commission &

Outreach staff, for design & coordination;  
thanks to all Commissioners  
who contributed to this newsletter!

**Meet the Commissioners!**

*The SWC is comprised of diverse women who volunteer to provide policy advice to Seattle City government about women, women's rights, and all issues of concern to women in Seattle.*

CO-CHAIRS

**Florence Adeyemi** – Editor, community newspaper African Forum News  
**Kathy Baxter** – Community arts manager, consultant

COMMISSIONERS

**Teresa Abellera** – History/English Major, Seattle University  
**Phyllis Bass** – Homeless Women's Advocate  
**Ahndrea Blue** – Lawyer in private practice  
**Jane Boyajian** – Dir., Tacoma-Pierce County Commission of Children, Youth and their families  
**Yuriko Brunelle** – Budget Analyst, Social Security Administration  
**Jody Drew** – Teacher, Roosevelt High School  
**Sue Feeder** – VP Bank of America; Welfare-to-Work Coordinator  
**Elizabeth Fountain** – Dir., City University's Masters in Counseling Program  
**Aaliyah Gupta** – Artist, Project Manager for Chaya for S. Asian victims of domestic violence  
**Marita Holdaway** – Gallery owner, Community Activist  
**Jacqueline Jainga-Hyllseth** – Administrator & volunteer coordinator  
**Channapha Khamvongsa** – Communications Specialist serving Asian seniors  
**Runette Mitchell** – Corrections Program Administrator, King County  
**Alison Pence** – Community Affairs Consultant  
**Diane Powers** – YWCA Reg. Dir., Homeless Services, Sea-King County-Snohomish County  
**Dr. Terry Rodriguez** – Leadership & Diversity Consultant, TRL & Associates  
**Bryn Savage** – Senior, Blanchet High School  
**Dr. Sharon Sutton** – UW Professor of Architecture, Urban Design, and Planning

**HUMAN RIGHTS DAY –**

**RESPECTING OUR TRADITIONS, CREATING A NEW VISION**

Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1999 – 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Arctic Building Dome Room, 700 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor

FEATURING **LAKOTA HARDEN**, Native American orator & activist - entertainment by Ewajo Dance Troupe